

UNITED STATES SPECIFICATION

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

BE IT KNOWN THAT I, Gianni PIVA, an Italian citizen,  
residing at Via Piave, 29, 31041 Cornuda (Treviso) Italy,  
have invented certain new and useful improvements in a

SOFT BOOT FOR SPORTS USE

of which the following is a specification.

## SOFT BOOT FOR SPORTS USE

### Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to the soft boots for sports use, in particular during snow.

### Background of the Prior Art

It is well known that among the several types of boots for sports use to be worn on the mountains, particularly on snow, used to a great extent, is the boot called "soft" which differs from the boot worn on skis because it has a soft structure rather than rigid and is provided with laces for closure.

In particular, in the soft boots for snowboarding, to provide the maximum opening/closure of the boot for the purpose of facilitating the insertion and extraction of the inner boot or insert, the running of the laces starting at the calf and ending at the tip or toe of the boot causes several drawbacks, in particular:

- it becomes necessary to undo the entire lacing to insert the inner boot into the interior of the boot and consequently it is necessary to carry out a complete re-attachment with the laces;

- in every point of sending the lace back for re-attachment, the same force of closure on the entire outer shell of the boot is manifested while for the comfort of the leg this force must be variable and decreasing from the calf to the top surface of the foot;

- the lateral parts provided with openings or ribbons for the passage of the laces and the lace itself in the condition of closure generates on the area of the boot a very irregular surface which facilitates the accumulation of snow, which depending on the climatic conditions, may undergo freezing, thus preventing the sliding of the lace or more frequently may melt, thus wetting the interior of the boot.

At the present state of the technique for the purpose of reducing these drawbacks, constructive solutions on the soft boot have been adopted which cover partially the involved area of the lacing by the application of covering elements

which are fixed on the boot vamp lace path or which constitute external additive elements which solve the problem of accumulation of snow in the tying area, actually have a drawback because they impose on the individual doing sports an additional operation in the phase of wearing boots.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to provide a boot for snow, for sports use, of the type called "soft" which is new with respect to similar products of known type and particularly it must allow to contain the points of lacing the boot to only the calf/neck area of the foot and therefore allow the use of a lace of reduced length.

Another object is to limit the force of closure of the lace in the outer shell to only the area in which there is required the greatest adherence between the leg and the boot.

Another object of the invention is the elimination of unevenness and cavities in the area of the top surface of the foot.

Still another object is to provide the boots particularly in the area of the top surface of the foot, with a round shape which facilitates the sliding of snow on the sides of this area.

Still another object is to ensure a boot which is comfortable and goes on quickly.

These objects are achieved by providing a soft boot with the application on the top surface of a plate of elastic material which extends longitudinally from the toe of the boot up to the base of the legging and transversely from one side to the other of the neck of the foot.

This plate is anchored to the boot upper and anterior part in a stable manner due to its borders which are attached to the boot upper preferably by sewing.

In addition, this plate is applied on the boot upper in condition of pretensionness.

The elasticity of the plate and the manner of application on the boot upper allow to achieve two important advantages:

a) the reduction of the length of the tying area which therefore engages only the protruding part of the legging without affecting the practicality of the opening/closure of the outer shell;

b) it also imparts to the outer boot or shell maximum softness and at the same time, it ensures comfortable holding of the foot.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

This invention will be better understood by means of the description of a possible achievement provided as a non-limiting example by means of the attached drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the boot and the additional plate which are separated one from the other; and

FIG. 2 is a view of the boot of FIG. 1 assembled.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

As shown in the figures, plate (1) of elastic material is applied on the boot (2) corresponding to the top surface (3) and extends longitudinally from the tip or toe (4) up to the base (5) of the legging (6) and transversely up to covering partially the two sides (7) of the outer boot shell. The outer boot is formed of a soft material such as soft synthetic fabric or hides.

The coupling of plate (1) to the outer shell is carried out by sewing the border (8) on the boot upper of the outer shell.

As easily shown by comparing the two figures, plate (1) when it is applied, covers advantageously a portion (9) of the central opening of the outer shell, in particular, the portion which engages the neck of the foot, so that the laces or other systems of closure of the outer shell are only present on the external portion (10) which engages the legging (6).

In addition, Fig. 2 shows that the plate, being applied on the boot upper with a certain degree of pretensionness acquires an external conformation which is convex and perfectly smooth, a fact which prevents the stagnation of the snow on the top surface of the boot.

This invention in addition provides that the plate, with the characteristics and the methods of application described hereinabove may be applied also on other types of "soft" footwear, such as mountaineering, trekking and similar boots.

Obviously, other forms of achievement are possible, different from the forms which have been described as a function of the type of the used outer shell or boot, as well as the plate which could be made of other materials, as long as they are suitable for the purpose without however, departing from the attached claims.